Focus on The Family is to us what the Rocky Mountains were to the pioneers, an obstacle, but never an impediment. When the first pioneers crossed the Great Plains on their way to California and came to the Rockies, they must have been awestruck at their beauty and size. But they were not stopped. They realized immediately that they could not move or destroy them to clear a pathway, but they went forward anyway. The closer they got, the better able they were to see the valleys and rivers, and so they went thru and over the Great Divide to other mountain ranges, until they came upon and crossed the Coastal Mountains of the Pacific Northwest, and there before them was a great ocean, stretching, it seemed, to the ends of the earth.

For us, Focus on The Family is an obstacle to be acknowledged and respected, just as we would respect the mountains, always being prepared. But it does not serve us any longer to do battle with either, but simply to use those means that allow us to go over and around them.

We will no longer engage in dialogue that is unproductive. We will no longer debate the Bible or other Religious Books. We will no longer accept the offer of our own special "water fountain" or a seat at the "back of the bus." We will not allow our community of mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, brothers and sisters to be described as unfit, unworthy, or frowned upon by a God created by those who would prefer to name us second class citizens. We will not allow AIDS to be labeled a Gay disease. We will not settle!

We will accept nothing short of full and equal choice, opportunity and responsibility. These are the tenets of freedom and they are guaranteed by our government to all.

There is no such thing as a little intolerance, a little prejudice, a little bigotry. At one time, in America Blacks, Jews, Moslems, and other minorities and faiths were considered inferior. At one time, these forms of intolerance could be advocated publicly and they were. Today, speaking derisively of any one of these groups is unacceptable in any forum. Why should we be any different?

The panel held Monday night to focus on homosexuality would not be held today in relation to any of the groups just mentioned. It would simply be ludicrous to even conceive of the worthiness of any of these individuals to equal rights. It would be unacceptable to say that we "personally, politically or theologically cannot support something other than a pure white evangelical Christian race, because that is what God intended."

People who teach intolerance under the guise of tolerance, also hide behind freedom of speech and expression to deliver their message without impunity. Thankfully, men and woman of open heart and mind, who understand the true meaning of equality and freedom of speech, are beginning to speak out as well. They are speaking for diversity—true and unequivocal tolerance for all.

"Four score and seven years ago our Fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men and women are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great Civil War testing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. . . ."

The words spoken by Abraham Lincoln over 130 years ago ring even more powerfully today. We are not free! And until we are free, we will not settle!